

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 OES-03 CU-02 EURE-00 EB-07 L-03

IO-10 INR-07 SP-02 DHA-02 ORM-01 /065 W

----- 050671

P 131022Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 37

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1684

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, BU

SUBJECT: TRAVEL BY DEPUTY SECRETARY INGERSOLL

REF: A) STATE 185294; B) SOFIA 1620; C) SOFIA 1601;

D) HELSINKI SECTO 8090

1. DEPUTY SECRETARY'S PLANNED TRIP TO BULGARIA IS JUST WHAT IS NEEDED HERE TO GET SOME FORWARD MOVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN STAGNATING SINCE THE SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN 1974 ABOUT WHICH I REPORTED DURING MY WASHINGTON CONSULTATIONS IN MAY. WE WELCOME THE VISIT AND ARE CERTAIN IT WILL BE EQUALLY WELCOMED BY THE GOB WHICH HAS WANTED A HIGH-LEVEL US VISIT FOR A LONG TIME. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV WILL BE IN NEW YORK FOR THE UNGA, BUT WE ARE FAIRLY CERTAIN THAT DEPUTY SECRETARY WILL BE RECEIVED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL.

2. WE PRESUME DEPUTY SECRETARY WILL COME PREPARED TO JOIN IN ANNOUNCEMENT OF INCEPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL AGREEMENT WHICH WAS DISCUSSED BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND MLADENOV IN HELSINKI (REF D). WE HAVE NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY TOLD MLADENOV WE WOULD BE GIVING THE BULGARIANS A REPLY TO THEIR DRAFT IN SEPTEMBER. THIS WILL BE AN EXCELLENT OCCASION TO DO SO.

3. OTHER SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS WHICH WE RECOMMEND BE RAISED ARE:
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A. DIVIDED FAMILIES. THERE ARE 72 OUTSTANDING CASES, SOME OF WHICH HAVE BEEN PENDING FOR YEARS DESPITE ASSURANCE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL (ZHIVKOV TO DENT IN APRIL 1974) THAT BULGARIANS WOULD REEXAMINE THEM IN A SYMPA-

THETIC SPIRIT ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. SINCE THEN ONLY TWO CASES HAVE BEEN GIVEN NECESSARY BULGARIAN DOCUMENTATION FOR TRAVEL TO THE US. BULGARIANS MUST BE REMINDED OF THIS LONGSTANDING PROBLEM AND THAT WE EXPECT IT TO BE RESOLVED PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF CSCE.

B. ACCESS. ALTHOUGH EMBASSY ACCESS TO OFFICIALS HAS IMPROVED ESPECIALLY AT THE AMBASSADOR/MINISTER LEVEL, HOPE MIGHT BE EXPRESSED THAT ACCESS WILL ALSO IMPROVE AT LOWER OFFICIAL LEVELS AND WITH THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD CERTAINLY BE IN KEEPING WITH THE SPIRIT OF HELSINKI.

C. TRADE. WE ARE HEARTENED BY THE INCREASE IN OUR TRADE (\$39 MILLION IN THE FIRST FIVE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR AS COMPARED WITH \$30.4 MILLION FOR ALL OF 1974), BUT THIS IS ONLY A BEGINNING. WE SHOULD TAKE POSITION THAT US IS PREPARED TO DISCUSS BROADER ECONOMIC RELATIONS IF THE BULGARIANS ARE. IF BULGARIANS REFER TO JACKSON-VANIK AMENDMENT AS AN OBSTACLE, IT MIGHT BE POINTED OUT THAT THE TRADE ACT SHOULD CREATE NO PROBLEMS SINCE THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER RANKING BULGARIAN OFFICIALS HAVE ASSURED THAT BULGARIA HAS NO EMIGRATION PROBLEMS. (RE JEWISH EMIGRATION, SEE SOFIA 1559, PARA 1 B).

D. EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL AND PRESS RELATIONS. THESE REMAIN AT A MINIMAL LEVEL. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE A FAR BROADER EXCHANGE IN THESE AREAS. FOR INSTANCE, THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM SHOULD BE REINSTATED (THERE WERE SOME HALF-HEARTED MOVES EARLIER THIS YEAR BUT IT FELL THROUGH); IVP GRANTS IN FIVE FIELDS HAVE BEEN OFFERED, BUT THE BULGARIANS PICKED UP ONLY THE SCIENTIFIC/TECHNICAL ONES, NONE IN THE HUMANITIES; AND THE ONLY MAJOR CULTURAL EVENT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ARRANGE SO FAR IS THE JOSE LIMON DANCE GROUP (WHICH BY COINCIDENCE WILL

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PERFORM HERE SEPTEMBER 15-17, I.E. DURING THE INGER-SOLL VISIT). COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN BULGARIAN PRESS AND OURS ARE ALMOST NON-EXISTENT. THIS WHOLE GENERAL AREA IS THE ONE WHICH THE BULGARIANS HOLD IN GREATEST SUSPICION AND IN WHICH THEY SHOW LITTLE FLEXIBILITY. AGAIN, REFERENCE TO CSCE WILL BE APPROPRIATE.

E. BULGARIANS WILL APPRECIATE HEARING FROM THE DEPUTY SECRETARY HOW WE SEE CERTAIN PROBLEMS SUCH AS THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE FUTURE OF THE UN. THEY ON THEIR PART WILL PROBABLY WISH TO EXPLAIN TO HIM BULGARIA'S BALKAN POLICY WHICH, STRIPPED OF ITS PROPAGANDA CONTENT, IS SIMPLY THE IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS WITH ALL NEIGHBORS OF WHOM ONLY ONE IS PRICKLY AT THIS

TIME, NAMELY YUGOSLAVIA OVER THE MACEDONIAN ISSUE.
AS FAR AS ALBANIA IS CONCERNED, THERE HAS BEEN NO
IMPROVEMENT.

4. WE STRONGLY HOPE PERMISSION FOR THE OPENING OF AT
LEAST ONE ADDITIONAL BULGARIAN TRADE OFFICE WILL HAVE
BEEN GRANTED PRIOR TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY'S ARRIVAL IN
SOFIA (REF C). IT WOULD IMPROVE THE ATMOSPHERE FOR THE
VISIT AND SET THE STAGE FOR PROGRESS IN OTHER MATTERS.

5. OVERALL, OUR RELATIONS WITH BULGARIA ARE IN FAIRLY
GOOD SHAPE, BUT TOO MANY BALLS HAVE BEEN RESTING IN OUR
COURT TOO LONG FOR REASONS UNRELATED TO THE TRADE ACT
(EXCEPT IN THE SENSE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A RELUCTANCE
TO FOCUS ON OUR RELATIONS WITH BULGARIA AS LONG AS THAT
MAJOR ISSUE WITH THE USSR WAS UNRESOLVED). UNTIL THE JACKSON-VANIK
AMENDMENT, BULGARIA'S PRINCIPAL AIM IN IMPROVING RELA-
TIONS WITH THE US WAS TO OBTAIN MFN. BUT THEY HAVE NEVER
CONCENTRATED ON THIS TO THE EXCLUSION OF OTHER ELEMENTS;
SO NOW THAT THE BULGARIANS ARE RELUCTANT TO MOVE TOWARD
MFN, THERE IS NO REASON ON EITHER SIDE WHY PROGRESS
CANNOT BE MADE IN A NUMBER OF SMALL WAYS, LEAVING
MFN FOR LATER. IN THIS STRANGE COUNTRY GOVERNED
BY A REGIME THAT IS CERTAINLY NOT GIVEN TO SENTIMENTAL-
ITY, AMERICA HAS LONG BEEN REGARDED AS STAND-OFFISH
WHILE OUR WESTERN ALLIES AND JAPAN HAVE BEEN
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DEVELOPING PROFITABLE RELATIONS WITH A CERTAIN DEGREE
OF CORDIALITY. THE FACT THAT THE DEPUTY SECRETARY
WILL COME PREPARED TO DISCUSS NOT ONLY BILATERAL BUT
ALSO WORLD PROBLEMS WILL THEREFORE ITSELF HELP TO
INTRODUCE A THAWING ELEMENT THAT CAN PAY DIVIDENDS IN
MANY WAYS, IN IMPROVED CONTACTS, TRADE, AND HUMANI-
TARIAN MATTERS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CULTURAL EXCHANGES, EAST WEST TRADE, HUMAN RIGHTS, MEETINGS, SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, THE PRESS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SOFIA01684
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750279-0767
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750899/baaaagkl.tel
Line Count: 149
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <24 SEP 2003 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971002
Subject: n/a
TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, BU, PFOR, (INGERSOLL, ROBERT S)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006